

# Reed College

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Coordinates: 45.48°N 122.63°W﻿ / ﻿

**Reed College** is a private, independent, liberal arts college located in southeast Portland, Oregon. Founded in 1908, Reed is a four-year residential college with a campus located in Portland's residential Eastmoreland neighborhood, featuring architecture based on the Tudor-Gothic style,<sup>[3]</sup> and a forested canyon wilderness preserve at its center. Reed is distinctively known for its mandatory freshman humanities program, as the only private undergraduate college with a nuclear reactor supporting its science programs,<sup>[4]</sup> and for the unusually high percentage of graduates who go on to earn PhDs and other postgraduate degrees.<sup>[5][6][7]</sup>

## Reed College



Mascot of Reed College

<b>Established</b>	1908
<b>Type</b>	Private liberal arts college
<b>Endowment</b>	\$427.3 million (June 2008) <sup>[1]</sup>
<b>President</b>	Colin Diver
<b>Faculty</b>	135
<b>Undergraduates</b>	1,442 (1,402 full-time; 40 part-time) <sup>[2]</sup>
<b>Postgraduates</b>	29
<b>Location</b>	Portland, Oregon, United States 45.48°N 122.63°W
<b>Campus</b>	Residential, 116 acres (470,000 m <sup>2</sup> )
<b>Mascot</b>	Griffin
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.reed.edu/">http://www.reed.edu/</a>

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## History

The **Reed Institute** (the legal name of the college) was founded in 1908, and Reed College held its first classes in 1911. Reed is named for Oregon pioneers Simeon Gannett Reed and Amanda Reed.<sup>[8]</sup> Simeon was an entrepreneur in trade on the Columbia River; in his will he suggested that his wife could "devote some portion of my estate to benevolent objects, or to the cultivation, illustration, or development of the fine arts in the city of Portland, or to some other suitable purpose, which shall be of permanent value and contribute to the beauty of the city and to the intelligence, prosperity, and happiness of the inhabitants."<sup>[9]</sup> The first president of Reed (1910–1919) was William Trufant Foster, a former professor at Bates College and Bowdoin College in Maine.



Reed College's Eliot Hall on a rare snowy day.

Contrary to popular belief, the college did not grow out of student revolts and experimentation, but out of a desire to provide a "more flexible, individualized approach to a rigorous liberal arts education."<sup>[10]</sup> Founded explicitly in reaction to the "prevailing model of East Coast, Ivy League education," the college's lack of varsity athletics, fraternities, and exclusive social clubs — as well as its coeducational, nonsectarian, and egalitarian status — gave way to an intensely academic and intellectual college whose purpose was to devote itself to "the life of the mind."<sup>[11]</sup>

The college holds a reputation for the progressive<sup>[12]</sup> and anti-authoritarian leanings of its community.

## Distinguishing features

According to sociologist Burton Clark, Reed is one of the most unusual institutions of higher learning in the United States,<sup>[13]</sup> featuring a traditional liberal arts and natural sciences curriculum. It requires freshmen to take Humanities 110 — an intensive introduction to the Classics, covering ancient Greece and Rome as well as the Bible and ancient Jewish history. Its program in the sciences is likewise unusual — Reed's TRIGA research reactor makes it the only school in the United States to have a nuclear reactor operated entirely by undergraduates.<sup>[4]</sup> Reed also requires all students to complete a thesis (a two-semester-long research project conducted under the guidance of professors) during the senior year as a prerequisite of graduation, and passing a junior qualifying exam at the end of the junior year is a prerequisite to beginning the thesis. Upon completion of the senior thesis, students must also pass an oral exam that may encompass questions not only about the thesis, but also about any course previously taken.

Reed maintains a 10:1 student-to-faculty ratio,<sup>[14]</sup> and its small classes emphasize a "conference" style, in which the teacher often acts as a mediator for discussion rather than a lecturer. While large lecture-style classes exist, Reed emphasizes its smaller lab and conference sections.

Although letter grades are given to students, grades are de-emphasized at Reed. According to the school, "[s]tudents are encouraged to focus on learning, not on grades. Students are evaluated rigorously, and semester grades are filed with the registrar, but by tradition, students do not receive standard grade reports. Papers and exams are generally returned to students with lengthy comments but without grades affixed. There is no dean's list or honor roll, and Reed does not award Latin honors at graduation."<sup>[15]</sup> Many Reedies graduate without knowing either their cumulative GPA or their grades in individual classes. Reed also claims to have experienced very little grade inflation over the years, noting, for example, that only seven students graduated with a perfect 4.0 GPA in the period from 1983 to 2007.<sup>[15]</sup> (Transcripts are accompanied by a card explaining Reed's relatively tough grading system, so as to not penalize students applying to graduate schools.)<sup>[16]</sup> Reed does make several awards for academic achievement at the Commencement ceremony, however, including naming students to Phi Beta Kappa.<sup>[17]</sup>

Reed has no fraternities or sororities, and few NCAA sports teams<sup>[18]</sup>, although physical education classes (which range from kayaking to juggling) are required for graduation. Reed also has several intercollegiate athletic teams, most notably the Rugby, Fencing, and Ultimate Frisbee teams.

Reed's ethical code is known as "The Honor Principle".<sup>[20]</sup> First introduced as an agreement to promote ethical academic behavior, with the explicit end of relieving the faculty of the burden of policing student behavior, the Honor Principle was extended to cover all aspects of student life. While inspired by traditional honor systems, Reed's Honor Principle differs from these in that it is a guide for ethical standards themselves, not just their enforcement. Under the Honor Principle, there are no codified rules governing behavior. Rather, the onus is on students individually and as a community to define which behaviors are acceptable and which are not.

What this means is that a community governed by an honor principle is a community not of rules and procedures but of virtue. As such, it is a community of unfreedom. There is no protected realm; one can never take refuge in, seek protection from, or hide behind a doctrine of rights. Anything that anyone does is, in principle, subject to evaluation. Was it a virtuous thing to do? Was it consistent with notions of honorableness? Does it contribute to the well-being of the community? Is it the kind of behavior that we value and wish to encourage? In the absence of rights, behavior that we do not wish to value and do not wish to encourage has absolutely no protection.

—Peter J. Steinberger, Dean of the Faculty<sup>[19]</sup>

Discrete cases of grievance, known as "Honor Cases", are adjudicated by a Judicial Board, which consists of nine full-time students. There is also an "Honor Council," which consists of students, faculty, and staff, designed to educate the community regarding the Honor Principle and mediate conflict between individuals.

## Academic program

Reed categorizes its academic program into five Divisions and the Humanities program. Overall, Reed offers five Humanities courses, twenty-six department majors, twelve interdisciplinary majors, six dual-degree programs with other colleges and universities, and programs for pre-medical and pre-veterinary students.

### Divisions

- Division of Arts: includes the Art (Art History and Studio Art), Dance, Music, and Theatre Departments;
- Division of History and Social Sciences: includes the History, Anthropology, Economics, Political Science, and Sociology Departments, as well as the International and Comparative Policy Studies Program;
- Division of Literature and Languages: includes the Classics, Chinese, English, French, German, Russian, and Spanish Departments, as well as the Creative Writing and General Literature Programs;
- Division of Mathematics and Natural Sciences: includes the Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry, and Physics Departments, and
- Division of Philosophy, Religion, Psychology, and Linguistics: includes the Psychology, Philosophy, Religion, and Linguistics Departments.



The Reed College campus

## Humanities program

Reed President Richard Scholz in 1922 called the educational program as a whole "an honest effort to disregard old historic rivalries and hostilities between the sciences and the arts, between professional and cultural subjects, and, ... the formal chronological cleavage between the graduate and the undergraduate attitude of mind."<sup>[21]</sup> The Humanities program, which came into being in 1943 (as the union of two year-long courses, one in "world" literature, the other in "world" history) is one manifestation of this effort. One change to the program was the addition of a course in Chinese Civilization in 1995. The faculty has also recently approved several significant changes to the introductory syllabus. These changes include expanding the parameters of the course to include more material regarding urban and cultural environments.<sup>[22]</sup>

Reed's Humanities program includes the mandatory freshman course *Introduction to Western Humanities* covering ancient Greek and Roman literature, history, art, religion, and philosophy. Sophomores, juniors, and seniors may take *Early Modern Europe* covering Renaissance thought and literature; *Modern Humanities* covering the Enlightenment, the French Revolution, the Industrial Revolution, and Modernism, and/or *Foundations of Chinese Civilization*. There is also a Humanities Senior Symposium.

## Interdisciplinary and dual-degree programs

Reed also offers interdisciplinary programs in American studies, Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, Chemistry/Physics, Classics/Religion, Dance/Theatre, History/Literature, International and Comparative Policy Studies (ICPS), Literature/Theatre, Mathematics/Economics, and Mathematics/Physics.

Reed offers dual-degree programs in Applied Physics (with OHSU/OGI), Computer Science (with University of Washington), Engineering (with Caltech and others), Environmental Science (with Duke University), and Fine Art (with the Pacific Northwest College of Art).

## Admissions and student demographics

Until the late 1990s, Reed accepted a larger percentage of total applicants than peer institutions — 76% in 1996. This led to high levels of attrition (drop-outs) during that period.<sup>[23]</sup> Since then, the number of applicants for freshman admission has increased sharply.<sup>[24]</sup> Since 2002, Reed's attrition rate has moved toward that of peer institutions, and the five-year graduation rate (76% for the 2003/2004 entering class<sup>[25]</sup>) now exceeds the national average.

In 2009, the applicant pool for the class of 2013 was the third largest in Reed's history: 3,159 students applied and 1,225 were admitted, for an admission rate of 38.8%. The admitted class of 2013's average combined Math and Verbal SAT scores were 1407; the mean composite ACT score was 31; and the mean high school GPA was 4.034.<sup>[26]</sup>

Reed's student body is 45% male and 55% female, and includes 22% minority students: 3% self-report as Black (including African-American, African, and Afro-Caribbean); 6% as Hispanic; 9% as Asian, 2% Native American, and 2% Mixed/Other.<sup>[27]</sup> Minority numbers include some of the 7% international citizens (13% of freshmen did not self-report their ethnicity). In the class of 2010, 38% of students are from the United States's West Coast (California, Oregon, Washington), with the most coming from California.

## Tuition and finances

The total base cost for the 2009-10 academic year, including tuition, fees and room-and-board, is \$49,950.<sup>[28]</sup> In recent years between 50% and 60% of students have received financial aid from the college.<sup>[29]</sup> In 2004 (the most recent data available), 1.4% of Reed graduates defaulted on their student loans<sup>[30]</sup> -- below the national Cohort Default Rate average of 5.1%.<sup>[31]</sup>

Reed's endowment as of June 30, 2008 was \$427.3 million, below the median of about \$500m for comparable schools, and well below Amherst and Swarthmore's approximately one billion dollar endowments.<sup>[32]</sup> During the 2009 fiscal year, the endowment is expected to contribute about \$19 million toward the college's operating expenses, an increase of about \$3 million from two years ago.<sup>[33]</sup>



Eliot Hall



Old Dorm Block and Anna Mann residences

## Reputation

## Rankings

*Main article: Criticism of college and university rankings (North America)*

In 1995 Reed College refused to participate in the U.S. News and World Report "best colleges" rankings, making it the first educational institution in the United States to refuse to participate in college rankings. According to Reed's Office of Admissions:

“ Reed College has actively questioned the methodology and usefulness of college rankings ever since the magazine's best-colleges list first appeared in 1983, despite the fact that the issue ranked Reed among the top ten national liberal arts colleges. Reed's concern intensified with disclosures in 1994 by the *Wall Street Journal* about institutions flagrantly manipulating data in order to move up in the rankings in U.S. News and other popular college guides. This led Reed's then-president Steven Koblik to inform the editors of U.S. News that he didn't find their project credible, and that the college would not be returning any of their surveys.<sup>[34]</sup> ”

*Rolling Stone*, in its 16 October 1997 issue, argued that Reed's rankings were artificially decreased by *U.S. News* after they stopped sending data to *U.S. News and World Report*.<sup>[35]</sup> Nicholas Thompson reiterated this judgment in an article in *The Washington Monthly* in 2000.<sup>[36]</sup> Reed has also made the same claim.<sup>[34]</sup> In discussing Reed's decision, President Colin Diver wrote in an article for the November 2005 issue of the *Atlantic Monthly*, "by far the most important consequence of sitting out the rankings game, however, is the freedom to pursue our own educational philosophy, not that of some news magazine."<sup>[37]</sup>

However, in 2005 Reed did submit statistics to the Princeton Review, and received first in Overall Undergraduate Academic Experience.

## Academic honors

Reed has produced the second-highest number of Rhodes scholars for any liberal arts college—31—as well as over fifty Fulbright Scholars, over sixty Watson Fellows, and two MacArthur ("Genius") Award winners.<sup>[5][38]</sup> A very high proportion of Reed graduates go on to earn Ph.D.s, particularly in the sciences, history, political science, and philosophy. Reed is third in percentage of its graduates who go on to earn Ph.D.s in all disciplines, after only Caltech and Harvey Mudd.<sup>[6]</sup> In 1961, *Scientific American* declared that second only to Caltech, "This small college in Oregon has been far and away more productive of future scientists than any other institution in the U.S."<sup>[39][40]</sup> Reed is first in this percentage in biology, second in chemistry and humanities, third in history, foreign languages, and political science, fourth in the physical sciences, math and computer science, and science and engineering, fifth in physics and social sciences, sixth in anthropology, seventh in area and ethnic studies and linguistics, and eighth in English literature and the medical sciences.<sup>[6]</sup>

Reed's debating team, which had existed for only two years at the time, was awarded the first place sweepstakes trophy for Division II schools at the final tournament of the Northwest Forensics Conference in February 2004.

Loren Pope, former education editor for *The New York Times*, writes about Reed in *Colleges That Change Lives*, saying, "If you're a genuine intellectual, live the life of the mind, and want to learn for the sake of learning, the place most likely to empower you is not Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Chicago, or Stanford. It is the most intellectual college in the country—Reed in Portland, Oregon."<sup>[41]</sup> In 2006, Newsweek magazine named Reed as one of twenty-five "New Ivies,"<sup>[42]</sup> listing it among "the nation's elite colleges". In 2009, The Princeton Review ranked Reed number two in "Best Classroom Experience," number three in "Students Study the Most," and number five in "Birkenstock-Wearing, Tree-Hugging, Clove-Smoking Vegetarians".<sup>[43]</sup>

## Political



Old Dorm Block

Reed has a reputation for being politically left-wing.<sup>[12]</sup> Whether in fact Reed's student body is more leftist than those of similar colleges is difficult to determine, but Reed's academic tradition of open and passionate debate often spills into the off-campus political arena and, combined with the freewheeling social environment, often leads to the appearance of radical leftism.

During the McCarthy era of the 1950s, then-President Duncan Ballantine fired Marxist philosopher Stanley Moore, a tenured professor, for his failure to cooperate with the HUAC investigation.<sup>[44][45]</sup> According to an article in the college's alumni magazine, "because of the decisive support expressed by Reed's faculty, students, and alumni for the three besieged teachers and for the principle of academic freedom, Reed College's experience with McCarthyism

stands apart from that of most other American colleges and universities. Elsewhere in the academic world both tenured and untenured professors with alleged or admitted communist party ties were fired with relatively little fuss or protest. At Reed, however, opposition to the political interrogations of the teachers was so strong that some believed the campus was in danger of closure."<sup>[46]</sup> A statement of "regret" by the Reed administration and Board of Trustees was published in 1981, formally revising the judgment of the 1954 trustees. In 1993, then-President Steve Koblik invited Moore to visit the College, and in 1995 the last surviving member of the Board that fired Moore expressed his regret and apologized to him.<sup>[47]</sup>

## Drug use

Since the 1960s, Reed has had a reputation for tolerating open drug use among its students,<sup>[48]</sup> and the 1998 Princeton Review listed Reed as the number-three school in the "reefer madness" category.<sup>[49]</sup> *The Insider's Guide to the Colleges*, written by the staff of *Yale Daily News*, also notes an impression among students of institutional permissiveness: "according to students, the school does not bust students for drug or alcohol use unless they cause harm or embarrassment to another student."<sup>[50]</sup> The 2008 Princeton Review does not mention Reed in its top 20 colleges for marijuana usage.

In April, 2008, student Alex Lluch died of a heroin overdose in his on-campus dorm room.<sup>[51]</sup> His death prompted revelations of several previous incidents, including the near-death heroin overdose of another student only months earlier.<sup>[52]</sup> College President Colin Diver said "I don't honestly know" whether the drug death was an isolated incident or part of a larger problem. "When you say Reed," Diver said, "two words often come to mind. One is brains. One is drugs."<sup>[53]</sup> Local reporter James Pitkin of the newspaper *Willamette Week* editorialized that "Reed College, a private school with one of the most prestigious academic programs in the U.S., is one of the last schools in the country where students enjoy almost unlimited freedom to experiment openly with drugs, with little or no hassles from authorities," though the *Willamette Week* stated the following week concerning Pitkin's editorial: "As of press time, almost 500 responses, many expressing harsh criticism of *Willamette Week*, had been posted on our website."<sup>[54]</sup> Reed reports only a single drug-related arrest on its campus since 2004.<sup>[55]</sup>

Reed's own Psychology Department has conducted an ongoing survey since 1999 regarding both drug use and perceptions of drug use on the Reed campus.<sup>[56]</sup> The study found that the perceived level of drug use was exaggerated: in particular, the perceived use of marijuana at Reed is once a week while the actual reported use is 50% once a month or more often. (However, on average, only 21% of the national college student population

report having used the drug within the last month.)<sup>[57]</sup>

## Campus

The Reed College campus was established on a southeast Portland tract of land known in 1910 as Crystal Springs Farm, a part of the Ladd Estate, formed in the 1870s from original land claims. The college's grounds include 116 contiguous acres, including a wooded wetland known as Reed canyon (see below).

Portland architect A. E. Doyle developed a plan modeled on Oxford University's St. John's College that was never implemented in full. The original campus buildings (including the Library, the Old Dorm Block, and what is now the primary administration building, Eliot Hall) are brick Tudor Gothic buildings in a style similar to Ivy League campuses. In contrast, the science section of campus, including the physics, biology, and psychology (originally chemistry) buildings, were designed in the Modernist style. The Psychology Building, completed in 1949, was designed by famed Modernist architect Pietro Belluschi at the same time as his celebrated Equitable Building in downtown Portland.

The campus and buildings have undergone several phases of growth, and there are now twenty-one academic and administrative buildings and eighteen residence halls. Since 2004, Reed's campus has expanded to include adjacent properties beyond its historic boundaries, such as the Birchwood Apartments complex and former medical administrative offices on either side of SE 28th Avenue, and the Parker House, across SE Woodstock from Prexy. At the same time the Willard House (donated to Reed in 1964), across from the college's main entrance at SE Woodstock and SE Reed College Place, was converted from faculty housing to administrative use. Reed announced on July 13, 2007, that it had purchased the Rivelli farm, a 1.5-acre (0.0061 km<sup>2</sup>) tract of land south of the Garden House and west of Botsford Drive. Reed's "immediate plans for the acquired property include housing a small number of students in the former Rivelli home during the 2007–08 academic year. Longer term, the college anticipates that it may seek to develop the northern portion of the property for additional student housing".<sup>[58]</sup>

Reed also owns more than a dozen homes adjacent to the campus that are used to house new and visiting faculty.

### Residence halls



The Old Dorm Block

Reed houses about 1,000 students in 18 residence halls on campus and several college-owned houses and apartment buildings on or adjacent to campus.<sup>[59]</sup> Residence halls on campus range from the traditional (i.e., Gothic Old Dorm Block, referred to as "ODB") to the eclectic (i.e., Anna Mann, a Tudor-style cottage built in the 1920s by Reed's founding architect A. E. Doyle, originally used as a women's hall<sup>[60]</sup>), language houses (Spanish, Russian, French, German, and Chinese), "temporary" housing, built in the 1960s (Cross Canyon - Chittick, Woodbridge, McKinley, Griffin), to more recently built dorms (Bragdon, Naito, Sullivan). There are also theme residence halls including everything from substance-free living to a cat residence hall. The college's



A. E. Doyle's 1920 Master Plan

least-loved complex (as measured by applications to the College's housing lottery), MacNaughton and Foster-Scholz, is known on campus as "Asylum Block" because of its post-World War II modernist architecture and interior spaces dominated by long, straight corridors lined with identical doors, said by students to resemble that of an insane asylum.<sup>[61]</sup> Until 2006, it was thought that these residence halls had been designed by architect Pietro Belluschi.

Under the 10-year Campus Master Plan adopted in 2006, Foster-Scholz is scheduled to be demolished and replaced, and MacNaughton to be remodeled.<sup>[59]</sup> According to the master plan, "The College's goal is to provide housing on or adjacent to the campus that accommodates 75% of the [full-time] student population. At present, the College provides on-campus housing for 838 students."<sup>[59]</sup>

In Spring 2007, the College broke ground on the construction of a new quadrangle with four new residence halls on the northwest side of the campus, which opened in Fall 2008. A new Spanish House residence has also been completed. Together, the five new residences add 142 new beds.<sup>[60]</sup>

## Reed Canyon

The Reed College Canyon, a natural area and national wildlife preserve, bisects the campus, separating the academic buildings from many of the residence halls (the so called *cross-canyon halls*). The canyon is filled by Crystal Creek Springs, a natural spring that drains into Johnson Creek.<sup>[62]</sup>

Canyon Day, a tradition spanning more than ninety years, is held twice a year. On Canyon Day students and Reed neighbors join canyon crew workers to spend a day helping with restoration efforts.<sup>[63]</sup>



The Blue Bridge

A landmark of the campus, the Blue Bridge, spans the canyon. It appears on almost every viewbook that the college circulates. This bridge replaced the unique cantilevered bridge that served in that spot between 1959 and 1991, which "featured stressed plywood girders — the first time this construction had been used on a span of this size: a straight bridge 132 feet (40 m) long and 15 feet (4.6 m) high. It attracted great architectural interest during its lifetime."<sup>[64]</sup>

A new pedestrian and bicycle bridge spanning the canyon was recently opened in Fall 2008. This bridge, dubbed the "Bouncy Bridge" by students, is 370 feet (110 m) long, about a third longer than the Blue Bridge, and "connect[s] the new north campus quad to Gray Campus Center, the student union, the library, and academic buildings on the south side of campus."<sup>[60]</sup>

## Douglas F. Cooley Gallery

Reed's Cooley Gallery is an internationally recognized contemporary art space located at the entrance to Reed's Hauser Library. It was established in 1988 as the result of a gift from Susan and Edward Cooley in honor of their late son.<sup>[65]</sup> The Cooley Gallery has exhibited international artists such as Mona Hatoum, Al Held, Marko Lulic and Gregory Crewdson as well as the contemporary art collection of Michael Ovitz.<sup>[66]</sup> In pursuit of its mission to support the curriculum of the art, art history, and humanities programs at Reed, the gallery produces three or four exhibitions each year, along with lectures, colloquia, and artist visits. The gallery is currently under the directorship of Stephanie Snyder,<sup>[67]</sup> who succeeded founding director Susan Fillin-Yeh in 2004.

## Food services

The cafeteria, known simply as "Commons", has a reputation for ecologically sustainable food services. Suiting the student body, vegan and vegetarian dishes feature heavily on the menu. It is currently the only cafeteria on the small campus, with the exception Caffè Paradiso, a small cafe on the other side of campus which also accepts board points.

The Reed College Co-op is a theme residence located in Garden House, after many years on the first floor of MacNaughton Hall. It is the only campus dorm that is independent of the school's board plan. This residence houses ten students who purchase and prepare food together, sharing chores and conducting weekly, consensus-based meetings. It is a close community valuing sustainability, organic food, consensus-based decisions, self-government, music, and plants.

The Paradox ("Est. in the 80s") is a student-run cafe located on campus. In 2003 the Paradox opened a second cafe, dubbing it the "Paradox Lost" (an allusion to John Milton's *Paradise Lost*), at the southern end of the biology building, in the space commonly called the "Bio Fishbowl." The new north-campus dorms, which opened in Fall 2008, feature yet another small cafe, dubbed "Cafe Paradiso", thereby providing three coffee shops within a 116-acre (0.47 km<sup>2</sup>) campus. This third shop is not student-run, but is handled instead by an outside catering service.

## Off-campus housing

Reed also has off-campus housing. Many houses in the Woodstock and Eastmoreland Portland neighborhoods are traditionally rented to Reed students. Many students traditionally give their houses creative nicknames as well, which can last through multiple cycles of rentership.

## Icons and student life

### Griffin

The official mascot of Reed is the griffin. In mythology, the griffin often pulled the chariot of the sun; in canto 32 of Dante's *Commedia* the gryphon is associated with the Tree of Knowledge. The griffin was featured on the coat-of-arms of founder Simeon Reed<sup>[3]</sup> and is now on the official seal of Reed College.

### School color

The official school color of Reed is Richmond Rose.<sup>[68]</sup> Over the years, institutional memory of this fact has faded and the color appearing on the school's publications and merchandise has darkened to a shade of maroon. The most common examples of "Richmond Rose" are the satin tapes securing the degree certificate inside a Reed College diploma.

### School song

The school song, "Fair Reed," is sung to the tune of the 1912 popular song "Believe Me, If All Those Endearing Young Charms." It was composed by former president William Trufant Foster shortly after Reed's founding, and is rarely heard today.<sup>[69]</sup>

### Student nickname

Reed students and alumni referred to themselves as "Reedites" in the early years of the college. This term faded

out in favor of the now ubiquitous "Reedie" after World War II.<sup>[70]</sup> Around campus, prospective students are called "prospies."

## Unofficial mottos and folklore

An unofficial motto of Reed is "Communism, Atheism, Free Love", and can be found in the Reed College Bookstore on sweaters, t-shirts, etc. It was a label that the Reed community claimed from critics during the 1920s as a "tongue-in-cheek slogan" in reference to Reed's nonconformism. Reed's founding president William T. Foster's outspoken opposition against the entrance of the United States into World War I, as well as the college's support for feminism, its adherence to academic freedom (i.e., inviting a leader of the Socialist Party of America to speak on campus about the Russian Revolution's potential impact on militarism, emancipation of women, and ending the persecution of Jews), and its nonsectarian status made the college a natural target for what was originally meant to be a pejorative slur.<sup>[71][72]</sup>

An alternative motto first appeared on shirts in 1976 as "Capitalism, Avarice, Free Beer", but never overtook the original in popularity. A small group of students has recently been petitioning the bookstore to update the shirts' text to read, "Socialism, Agnosticism, Safe Sex", a comment on the increasingly moderate (though still quite radical) predominating values of the student body. Additionally, the punning "Reed: You Might Learn Something" was a popular slogan in the mid-1980s.



Faux Reed Seal

Another popular characterization was from a letter to the local newspaper, in which Reed students were said to resemble "unmade beds" which provided a subject for creating special Reed occasion costumes.

Every year's *Reed College Student Handbook* (a manual on student life written by students, not to be confused with the *College Handbook*, which is written by college officials) contains a test called the "Reed College Immorality Quotient" that tests an individual's immorality on topics such as sex, theft, and drug use.

One of the unofficial symbols of Reed is the Doyle Owl, a roughly 280-pound (130 kg) concrete statue that has been continuously stolen and re-stolen since 1913.

The on-campus folklore of events surrounding the Doyle Owl is sufficiently large that, in 1983, a senior thesis was written on the topic of the Owl's oral history. The original Doyle Owl was almost certainly destroyed many years ago, but a number of replicas (of varying degrees of quality) remain in circulation, contributing to the frequency of its appearance.

Well-known on-campus myths claim there is an intact MG under the concrete foundation of the college library, an underground primate lab working exclusively with snow monkeys under the Psychology building (the legend states that the presence of this lab was discovered when a snow monkey escaped into the Canyon and necessitated the closing of the facility), and a four-story lab/habitation arcology under the Physics building. There are many other such stories, often referred to as "Reed legends".

## Paideia

During the week before the beginning of second-semester classes, the campus holds Paideia (roughly drawn from the Greek, meaning 'education').<sup>[73]</sup> This festival of learning takes the form of ten days (although originally a whole month) of classes and seminars put on by anyone who wishes to teach, including students, professors, staff members, and outside educators invited on-campus by members of the Reed Community. The classes are intended to be informal, yet intellectual activities free of the usual academic pressure endemic to Reed.<sup>[74]</sup>

Many such classes are explicitly trivial (one long-running tradition is to hold an underwater basket weaving class), while others are trivially academic (such as "Giant Concrete Gnome Construction", a class that, incidental to building monolithic gnomes, includes some content relating to the construction of pre-Christian monoliths). More structured classes (such as martial arts seminars and mini-classes on obscure academic topics), tournaments, and film festivals round out the schedule, which is different every year. The objective of Paideia is not only to learn new (possibly non-useful) things, but to turn the tables on students and encourage them to teach.

In his 2005 Stanford commencement lecture, Apple Computer founder and Reed drop out Steve Jobs credited a Reed calligraphy class for his focus on choosing quality typefaces for the Macintosh.<sup>[75]</sup> While the full calligraphy course is no longer taught at Reed, Paideia usually features a short course on the subject.

## Renn Fayre

Renn Fayre is an annual three-day celebration at Reed with a different theme each year. Born in the 1960s as an actual renaissance fair, it has long since lost all connection to anachronism and the Renaissance, although its name has persisted.

Renn Fayre commences with the Thesis Parade, where graduating seniors make a symbolic march to deliver their theses to the registrar and a fiery pit to burn the year's notes. Students, faculty, and staff gather at the entrance to the library where chaos and champagne get the party started. The parade commences when the senior class moves through the library and out through what was the library's original front entrance (now an emergency exit).



A student-made katamari at the 2006 Renn Fayre

The Fayre runs from Friday to Sunday, beginning on the last day of classes for the spring semester. The week after Renn Fayre is Reading Week, in which no classes are held; final examinations are held in the following week.

Renn Fayre is often called the metaphorical explosion of the student body after a year of intense pressure. Traditions and events include bizarre art installations, bug-eating contests, the alumni Meat Smoke, a naked Slip 'n Slide, occasional motorized couches, fireworks, naked people painting themselves blue (a tribute to the ancient Picts), a beer garden, the Glo Opera (performed at night by actors covered in EL wire and glowsticks), lube wrestling, full-contact human chess, parachuters, castle-storming and bike-jousting by members of C.H.V.N.K. 666, a fire-dancing performance by the Weapons of Mass Distraction (the college's own Fire Troupe), and a general sense of mayhem. Serious injuries are rare, thanks in part to the non-profit White Bird Clinic, and the presence of vigilant student volunteers (the "Karma Patrol") who stay sober, distribute bagels and water, and ensure the wellness of Renn Fayre participants, while the "Border Patrol" sees to the exclusion of unauthorized visitors.

Student participation is almost unanimous; faculty and staff also attend some of the festivities. Alumni and authorized guests may also participate.

## Student organizations

According to Reed's website, each semester, a \$130 student body fee "is collected from each full-time student by the business office, acting as agent for the student senate. The fee underwrites publication of the student newspaper and extracurricular activities, and partially supports the student union and ski cabin."<sup>[76]</sup> Student body funds (totalling roughly \$370,000 annually) are distributed each semester to groups that place among the

top 40 organizations in the semester's funding poll. The funding poll uses a voting system in which each organization provides a description that is ranked by each member of the student body with either 'top six', 'approve', 'no opinion', 'disapprove' or 'deep six.' These ranks are then tabulated by assigning numbers to each rank and summing across all voters.<sup>[77]</sup> Afterwards, the top forty organizations present their budgets to the student body senate during Funding Circus. The following day the senate makes decisions about each budget in a process called Funding Hell.

The school's student-run newspaper, the *Quest*, has been published since 1913, and its radio station, KRRC, has been broadcasting, with a few interruptions, since 1955.<sup>[78][79]</sup>

Most organizations are highly informal, although some that partner with outside groups such as Oxfam or Planned Parenthood are more structured. The Reed archive of comic books and graphic novels, the MLLL (Comic Book Reading Room), is well into its fourth decade, and Beer Nation, the student group that organizes and manages various beer gardens throughout the year and during Renn Fayre, has existed for many years. Some organizations, such as the Motorized Couch Collective – dedicated to installing motors and wheels into furniture – have become more Reed myth than reality in recent years.<sup>[80]</sup>

Reed has ample recreational facilities on campus, a ski cabin on Mount Hood, recreational clubs such as the Reed Outing Club (ROC), and Club Sports (with college-paid coaches), including ultimate frisbee, co-ed soccer, rugby, basketball, and squash.<sup>[81]</sup>

## Notable alumni

*Main article: List of Reed College people*

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## External links

- Reed College (<http://www.reed.edu/>) - official website
  - Virtual Tour of Reed (<http://web.reed.edu/apply/tour/>)
  - The Reed Nuclear Reactor website (<http://reactor.reed.edu/>)
  - Reed College Library home page (<http://library.reed.edu/>)
  - Reed College Institutional Research (<http://web.reed.edu/ir/>)
  - Common Data Set (CDS), 2008-2009 (<http://web.reed.edu/ir/cds/index08.html>)
  - Reed College Canyon website (<http://web.reed.edu/canyon>)
  - Lyrics to "Fair Reed," with a brief description (<http://people.reed.edu/~reyn/almamater.html>)
  - 10-Year Campus Master Plan, adopted August 31, 2006 (<http://web.reed.edu/campusmasterplan/>)
- Reed College LiveJournal Community (<http://www.livejournal.com/community/reedlj/>)
- Rennfayre.com Student-run Renn Fayre website (<http://www.rennfayre.com>) .
- Distinctively American: The Residential Liberal Arts Colleges (<http://www.collegenews.org/x492.xml>)

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